

SOME NOTES ON THE PLUMAGE OF THE MALE FLORIDA RED-WING (*AGELAIUS P. FLORIDANUS*).

While engaged in field work in Louisiana during June of the present year, my attention was called to a seeming absence or greatly restricted color marking on the shoulders of a considerable percentage of the males of the local red-wings (apparently *Agelaius p. floridanus*); and as I can discover no reference to this condition during the breeding season, the following notes may be of interest.

Red-wings were most abundant about the marshes of the mainland, but were also represented by breeding examples on the outermost islands of the Gulf, such as the Chandeleur and Errol groups, or wherever suitable environmental conditions existed. In Cameron Parish, southwest Louisiana, they were particularly abundant, the extensive marshes which characterize this region affording ideal breeding places and nests containing eggs in various stages of incubation or newly hatched young, were observed daily. The neighborhood of dykes bordering rice fields and the levees of the canals formed the centers of abundance for nests. An occasional nest containing well-fledged young was found but in no case were they able to fly, so that the breeding season could be considered as at its height. At this point, males in the full brilliant nuptial plumage were in the vast majority and only an occasional example was noted that lacked the glossy black body and bright red epaulettes. But at Avery Island, Iberia Parish, I was at once impressed by the reversed ratio, and, although it is probable that they were breeding in the vicinity (sparingly, at least), no nests were discovered, nor were more than one or two females seen during a period of six days. Dull colored males were extremely numerous, fully 150 being under observation one afternoon as they fed from the feed boxes on the State Game Farm. As they had become quite tame here it was a simple matter to select a series exhibiting the variations in color and markings.

Special attention was paid to the dissection of the specimens obtained as a means of determining the exact conditions of age and reproductive development. In so far as the cellular structure of the skull may be employed as a criterion of age, the specimens were all obviously adult, *i. e.*, at least one year old. The undeveloped state of the sexual organs, however, was conclusive proof that they were non-breeders, and in addition to this condition, the plumage showed unmistakable signs of immaturity, the most apparent being the aforementioned obscured shoulder patches. On one specimen red or orange is almost totally lacking, a few under feathers alone exhibiting any trace of color other than black. From this extreme a complete and fully connected gradation is afforded, the examples at the other end of the series displaying well marked patches approximating bittersweet orange,¹ but even this contrasts greatly when compared with the brilliant scarlet red of the breeding birds. A few of these non-breeders (the ones with the most restriction on the shoulder color) still show a few of the ashy tips to the feathers of the upper breast; this last, however, is extremely variable and in no case is it at all extensive. Moreover, the glossy and more or less

¹Ridgway's Color Standards and Nomenclature.

iridescent black of the head and body plumage of the breeding bird is almost entirely lacking, the black being dull and non-lustrous. On the lower belly and back it is decidedly brownish, while the remiges are ashy brown on the portion extending beyond the closed secondaries, a dull brownish black gradually replacing this color anteriorly. This color is also shared by the tertiaries in a lesser degree, and the entire body plumage has a more or less worn and rough appearance as contrasted with the smooth glossy covering of the breeders.

A parallel to this unique condition is probably to be found in the orchard, hooded, and perhaps other tropical and sub-tropical orioles which require three years for the acquisition of the full plumage, although it may be that these species will breed in the garb of immaturity (I have no definite information concerning this last). Among the other varieties of *Agelaius* I know of none that exhibit this peculiarity which if proven consistent may make necessary a rearrangement of the group, with *A. p. floridanus* raised to full specific rank.

—F. C. Lincoln, Denver, Colo.

A NEW NAME FOR A DROMIID CRAB.

In 1902¹ I changed the current name of the Indo-Pacific *Dromia*, the most widely distributed of the sponge-crabs, from *Dromia rumphii* Fabricius, 1798, to the earlier name *Dromia dormia* (Linnaeus).²

A similar change should be made in the name of the European *Dromia*, now known as *Dromia vulgaris* Milne Edwards. The Linnaean name, *caput mortuum*, should be restored and the species should be called *Dromia caput mortuum*³ (Linnaeus). Milne Edwards himself says⁴ that Linnaeus's *caput mortuum* appears to be simply an age variety of *vulgaris*.

The species to which Milne Edwards gave the name *caput mortuum*⁵ is altogether different: it occurs in the Indo-Pacific, and is as large as *D. dormia* or the true *D. caput mortuum*, but is less abundant. *D. caput mortuum* Milne Edwards, 1837, is now in need of a new specific name, for which I would suggest **edwardsi**. As the species has been placed in *Dromidiopsis* by Borradaile,⁶ tentatively, and later by Ihle,⁷ its full name is **Dromidiopsis edwardsi**.

To summarize the above changes in three of the largest Dromiids, *Dromia dormia* (Linnaeus, 1763)=*D. rumphii* Fabricius, 1798, and most subsequent authors. Indo-pacific.

Dromia caput mortuum (Linnaeus, 1766)=*D. vulgaris* Milne Edwards, 1837.

Western Europe, west coast of Africa, Mediterranean.

Dromidiopsis edwardsi Rathbun, 1919=*Dromia caput mortuum* Milne Edwards, 1837, not *Cancer caput mortuum* Linnaeus, 1766. Indo-Pacific.

—Mary J. Rathbun.

¹Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., vol. 26, p. 32.

²*Cancer dormia* Linnaeus, Amoen. Acad., vol. 6, 1763, p. 413.

³*Cancer caput mortuum*, Sys. Nat., ed. 12, vol. 1, 1766, p. 1050, type locality, Algeria.

⁴Hist. Nat. Crust., vol. 2, 1837, p. 173, footnote.

⁵Op. cit., p. 178.

⁶Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 7, vol. 11, 1903, p. 299.

⁷Die Decapoda Brachyura der Siboga-Expedition, I, Dromiacea, 1913, p. 28.